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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 003302

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STATE FOR WHA/MEX, INR, INL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/22/2017
TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [ECON](#) [MX](#)
SUBJECT: VIOLENCE CONTINUES UNABATED

REF: A. (A) HERMOSILLO 000179
[1](#)B. (B) MONTERREY 000596

Classified By: Amb. Antonio O. Garza Jr. for reasons 1.4 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Widespread narco-violence in Mexico continues unabated since the Embassy reported on soaring Cartel-related bloodshed in mid-May. While there have been no spectacular, multi-fatality shootouts matching the spate that characterized the early spring, 37 federal, state and local officials were killed countrywide since May 18 (compared to 33 the month previous). No pattern has emerged indicating the cartels have decided to take on the Mexican state frontally, but violence and criminality continue to stress the political system, and Mexico,s citizens are looking to the Calderon administration to show greater headway in curbing both. End Summary.

State and Local Police Primary Target

[1](#)2. (C) Based on news reports in national and local dailies, the Embassy recorded the killings of more than 37 law enforcement, civil service officials and politicians throughout the country since our last violence report on May 18 (see reftel). Many attacks occurred in areas of traditional narco-bloodletting, such as Nuevo Leon, Michoacan and Guerrero. However, even locales that have been spared up until now, such as Cuernavaca, Tabasco, Toraon and Chiapas, registered attacks during the reporting period. Mexico,s prosperous industrial heartland around Monterrey "long immune to narco-violence" has seen a particularly worrisome surge in attacks in recent months (reftel).

[1](#)3. (C) The majority of attacks also continued to be directed against state and local law enforcement elements, but 12 civilian officials or politicians were targeted (up from six the month before). Several incidents involved elected officials, such as the killing of two state legislators in Oaxaca in late May, the particularly grisly beheading of a town councilman in Tabasco during the same week, and the June 12 killing of a Nuevo Leon state congressman (PRI).

[1](#)4. (C) Although law enforcement and civil service personnel continue to bear the brunt of the violence, no pattern has yet emerged buttressing one or another theory that the uptick in bloodshed is a result of Cartel score-settling, lashing out at the more aggressive tactics adopted by the Calderon administration in recent months, or high-profile intimidation

of the Mexican public.

¶5. (C) Violence is putting increasing stress on the system, however. Political and institutional actors of all stripes agree with us that violence is Mexico,s number one problem, a point that the Calderon administration clearly realizes. Every Mexican legislator present at the recent Inter-parliamentary Group meeting in Austin, for example, began his/her intervention by underscoring the internal security threats facing Mexico. Consensus ends there. Second-guessing of Calderon,s security push has become a minor blood-sport here. More violence, military deaths and the inevitable further mistakes by soldiers such as the killing earlier this month of two women and three children by soldiers in the state of Sinaloa will occasion further questioning of his overall counter-drug strategy, and his decision in particular to involve the military more deeply.

¶6. (C) The widespread assumption in Mexico remains that many members of Mexico,s police forces have been corrupted by the drug trade and individual policemen and officials are paying the price. The inchoate nature of the killing only adds to the uneasiness here, however, and puts greater onus on President Calderon (and, to a certain extent, on us since we are now identified as engaged in assistance discussions with his administration) to not only put an end to the bloodshed, but end the legacy of corruption that has undermined law enforcement at all levels.

¶7. (C) He will no doubt face continued pressure in coming months. The latest polling (first half of May), while showing continued strong personal support for the President among the Mexican public, shows a slippage in the number of respondents

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who believe his security strategy is yielding results down to less than a third(although a slightly larger percentage thought it was too early to judge.)

¶8. (C) Comment: President Calderon has given every indication that his battle against the cartels will be long-term and to date he has shown no signs of wavering. Indeed, the GOM,s rapid response to our request that it re-arrest former Quintana Roo governor Mario Villanueva upon his release from prison demonstrates Calderon,s unwavering commitment to the cause. Now is the time for us to show our appreciation and respect for our neighbor,s commitment to the rule of law by significantly increasing our material support to the GOM,s law enforcement efforts. If we delay, we may find that any future support is too little, too late. End Comment.

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